

Message Text

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17/41

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: BOMB INCIDENT AT EMBASSY

1. NOV 5 AT APPROXIMATELY NOON, BULGARIAN NATIONAL LATER IDENTIFIED AS PETUR STEFAN PETRASHKOV ENTERED EMBASSY LIBRARY /RECEPTION AREA, SAID HE HAD AN IMPORTANT STATEMENT TO MAKE, AND THREATENED TO COMMIT SUICIDE WITH BOMB, WHICH HE CLAIMED WAS IN HIS BRIEFCASE, IF HE WAS REQUIRED TO LEAVE. POLITICAL/ ECONOMIC OFFICER FSO JOSEPH E. LEE WAS TELEPHONED BY RECEPTIONIST. MEANWHILE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AND MARINE SECURITY GUARDS WERE ALERTED AND TOOK UP POSITIONS IN CASE THEIR INTERVENTION WAS NECESSARY.

2. LEE ARRIVED AT RECEPTION AREA, QUIETLY ADVISED RECEPTION-IST TO CALL MEDICAL AUTHORITIES AND ESCORTED PETRASHKOV INTO CONSULAR OFFICE. AT SAME TIME, ADMIN OFFICER FSRU JOHN G. SCHOLL HAD MARINE GUARDS STAND BACK TO AVOID EXCITING PETRASHKOV AND HAD LIBRARY CLEARED OF LOCAL STAFF AND VISITORS. PETRASHKOV THEN HPLD LEE HE HAD EVIDENCE RUSSIANS AND BULGARIANS HAD DEVELOPED A SPECIAL LASER WEAPON THAT KILLS WHILE SIMULATING HEART ATTACK, THAT HE KNEW OF TERRIBLE BACTERIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, THAT ONE OF THESE WEAPONS HAD BEEN USED IN CYPRUS WHERE A BULGARIAN ATH-LETIC TEAM WAS VISITING WHEN GRIVAS DIED, ETC.

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3. DURING COURSE OF THIS RAMBLING CONVERSATION, IT BECAME CLEAR TO LEE THAT PETRASHKOV WAS MENTALLY DISTURBED AND HAD NO SUBSTANTIVE EVIDENCE TO OFFER. HE HIMSELF SAID HE HAD BEEN COMMITTED TO AN ASYLUM, ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMED TO BE COMPLETELY NORMAL. IN VIEW OF POSSIBLE VIOLENCE WE ALERTED MFA THAT HELP OF POLICE MIGHT BE NEEDED TO REMOVE THE MAN FROM OUR PREMISES. WE ATTEMPTED TO PERSUADE PETRASHKOV TO LEAVE BUILDING AND TO RETURN ANOTHER TIME. PETRASHKOV REFUSED BUT AFTER LENGTHY COLLOQUY DID AGREE TO HAND OVER ALLEGED EXPLOSIVES FROM BRIEFCASE IN RETURN FOR BEING ALLOWED TO MAKE STATEMENT TO TAPE RECORDER. AFTER TAPE RECORDER WAS SET UP AND PETRASHKOV BEGAN HIS STATEMENT, WHICH CONTAINS NOTHING OF INTEREST, BULGARIAN MEDICAL AND POLICE AUTHORITIES WHO WERE WAITING OUTSIDE LIBRARY WERE INVITED IN AND ATTEMPTED TO PERSUADE PETRASHKOV TO LEAVE VOLUNTARILY. BEING REFUSED, THEY ESCORTED HIM OUT FORCIBLY BUT WITHOUT VIOLENCE. AT BULGARIAN AUTHORITIES' REQUEST, PACKAGE CONTAINING ALLEGED EXPLOSIVES ALS TURNED OVER TO THEM. ENTIRE INCIDENT TOOK APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR.

4. DCM WAS CALLED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY MORNING OF NOVEMBER 10 AND WAS TOLD PETRASHKOV HAD LENGTHY HISTORY OF MENTAL ILLNESS, HAD ESCAPED FROM PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL AT RADNEVO, STARA ZAGORA DISTRICT, AND WAS BEING SOUGHT BY POLICE. (NOTE: THIS DOES NOT SQUARE WITH EVIDENCE SHOWN LEE IN FORM OF A PASS FROM STARA ZAGORA PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, PERMITTING PETRASHKOV TO VISIT HIM HOME FROM SEPTEMBER 6 TO DECEMBER 12, 1975). DCM WAS TOLD THAT DURING HIS DE-BRIEFING AT HOSPITAL TO WHICH HE WAS TAKEN, PETRASHKOV SAID HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO MAKE STATEMENT TO TAPE RECORDER. MFA THEREFORE INQUIRED IF COPY OF TAPE COULD BE PROVIDED SINCE STAFF PSYCHIATRISTS SAID IT WOULD BE OF USE. DCM REPLIED PETRASHKOV WAS ALLOWED TO MAKE STATEMENT AT HIS REQUEST AND EMBASSY WOULD CONSIDER WHETHER COPY COULD BE SUPPLIED. FINALLY, DCM WAS TOLD EXPLOSIVES CONSISTED OF DETONATING CAP PLUS MATERIAL OF KIND USED IN BLANK CARTRIDGE PISTOLS USED BY RACE STARTZMS, NOT ENOUGH TO BLOW UP BUILDING BUT THAT IT COULD HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INJURED PERSONS NEARBY AND STARTED A FIRE.

5. WE INTEND INFORM FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT DUE TO TAPE RECORDER MALFUNCTION PETRASHKOV'S STATEMENT WAS NOT RECORDED SINCE, DESPITE DISCLAIMER, WE FEAR TAPE WOULD BE USED AGAINST PETRASHKOV. (NOTE: TAPE CONTAINS RAMBLING, SEMI-COHERENT DIATRIBE AGAINST REGIME). WE WILL PROVIDE GOB WITH SANITIZED COPY OF MEVURANDUM FOR THE

FILES WHICH RECORDS INCIDENT.

6. FINALLY, AMBASSADOR BELIEVES LEE AND SCHOLL ARE TO
BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR COURAGE AND FOR THE CALM,
PROFESSIONAL MANNER IN WHICH THEY DEALT WITH THE
INCIDENT.
HERZ

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